

JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

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CENTENNIAL PLANS

Thirty representative church leaders including Dr. Michio Kozaki, the Reverend Kiyoshi Hirai, General Secretary of the National Christian Council, and the Reverend Edwin B. Dozier, prominent missionary of the Southern Baptist Church met at the Kanda YMCA to discuss plans to invite Dr. Billy Graham to Japan in 1959. In order to secure the cooperation of as large a number of Christian groups as possible, no final decision was reached. A second conference will be held on January 21, 1957. The National Christian Council Centennial Celebrations have been tentatively set for October 1959. The Episcopal Church is planning to commemorate the Centennial in May 1959. Prior to this the Quadrennial General Meeting of the Church will be held. The Archbishop of Canterbury is expected to participated in both events.

December 19

NEW NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE DEDICATED

Dr. Toyohiko Kagawa was the main speaker at the dedication of a Neighborhood House in the Katsushika Ward, Tokyo on December 2. This institution is the result of years of labor on the part of the Reverend Mataro Nakayama, well-known evangelist who since his repatriation from Shanghai in 1949 has devoted his life to people in the underworld of the Ueno area. Being associated with Dr. Kagawa's "Friends of Jesus Society", Mr. Nishimura was invited to the United States a few years ago to speak to the churches and received ¥ 900,000 (\$ 2,500) from friends interested in his work. With this as a nucleus, he was able to raise ¥ 1.8 million in Japan and thus realize his goal. The Neighborhood House has a day nursery, night school, and sanitarium. In the future a youth guidance office and a legal consultation service will be added.

CHRISTMAS RADIO PROGRAMS

The Japan Broadcasting Company, in cooperation with the Audio Visual Aids Commission of the National Christian Council is promoting a number of special Christmas programs this month. The first was a "Christian Public Discussion Meeting" at the Kanagawa Municipal Music Hall in Yokohama on November 30 under the sponsorship of local United Church of Christ in Japan churches. This was recorded and broadcast on the morning of December 2. The Reverend Yoshizo Kitamori, a professor at Tokyo Union Theological Seminary, spoke on "The Present Age and Christianity", and the Reverend Masahisa Suzuki, minister of the Hongo Komagome Church on "The Present Age and the Church". On December 7-21 at 11 o'clock in the evening Dr. Zenta Watanabe, well-known Baptist minister and authority on the Old Testament, is in charge of a program entitled "Life's Readings". On December 16 the "Religious Music Hour" will feature Bach's music with explanations by the Reverend Fumio Fukazu, and a special Christmas program will be broadcast on Sunday morning of December 23. Finally on Christmas Eve, a program entitled "Christmas and Peace" will be on the air.

YOUTH FOR CHRIST MEETINGS

Special Christmas services are being held by Youth for Christ in twenty-five juvenile detention homes and prisons during the month of December. The programs include music, movies, conjuring tricks, distribution of portions of the Bible and a Christmas message. Due to shortage of funds, according to the Reverend Mr. Kamiyama who is responsible for the program, it is impossible to give any Christmas presents.

NORTHERN KYUSHU MINERS AID HOKKAIDO

Remembering the help received through Church World Service last year, when they were in such great distress, miners and their families in Northern Kyushu recently carried on a special campaign and sent ¥ 12,000 (about \$ 35.00) to Church World Service for the famine sufferers in Hokkaido.

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JAPAN HARVEST FALL ISSUE

The Fall Number of Japan Harvest, official organ of the Evangelical Missionary Association of Japan, is off the press. Articles of special interest are "The Holiness Church" by Y. Yoneda, Professor of Tokyo Bible Seminary, "Income Tax Information" by Bob Mueller, the Association's Tax Consultant; "Your health" by Dr. Alfred B. Webber, of the local Seventh Day Adventist Hospital, and a discussion of financial aid for churches entitled, "To give or not to give" by Arthur T. Reynolds of the former China Inland Mission and Edwin B. Dosier, a well-known Southern Baptist leader.

CHRISTMAS PRESENTS FOR NEEDY HOKKAIDO CHILDREN

Church World Service is promoting a project to send Christmas presents to school children in the rural areas of Hokkaido. Famine conditions prevail in some areas following disastrous cold spells which destroyed the crops. Fourteen pioneer villages, which are composed of repatriates and war victims, are the worst hit. At the request of a special relief committee Church World Service has already sent up two-months food supplies to 6,963 needy households. 776 tons of rice was sent for this purpose from the United States. The National Christian Council and the Education Association of Christian Schools are cooperating in a plan to send Christmas presents.

SOCIAL PROBLEMS DISCUSSED

Twenty members of the Social Problems Committee of the United Church of Christ in Japan met at Hayama, November 29-30 for the first time since the biennial meeting in October. Actions included a decision to (1) send "Goodwill Packages" to famine sufferers in Hokkaido and make a financial grant to the local committee in charge of distributing aid, (2) urge the Diet to pass a bill to aid victims of atomic bombings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, (3) investigate the Okinawa land situation and seek a remedy, (4) appeal for aid to Hungarian refugees. A special committee was appointed to investigate the situation of atomic bombing victims.

MINISTERS PENSIONS

A recent report states that the United Church of Christ now pays ¥14,250 (\$ 11.72) a month to retired ministers who have served forty-two years and ¥ 2,500 (\$ 7.00) a month to those who served twenty-five years. The families of deceased ministers who have served these long years receive fifty percent of the above amounts. In connection with Centennial activities in 1959, the Church plans to raise the pensions to ¥ 5,000 a month. There are now 47 retired ministers affiliated with the United Church and 66 families of deceased ministers on pension. The total budget for pensions is ¥ 3.6 million (\$ 10,000) of which about one third is supposed to be raised by a special Thanksgiving offering.

LUTHERANS CONSIDER CLOSER COOPERATION

Representatives of eleven Lutheran denominations met at the Kanda YMCA on November 28th to consider closer cooperation and possible union. Two years ago preliminary discussions were held but in the intervening period very little progress has been made. No major obstacles such as creed or constitution appear to exist but there are a number of problems which stand in the way of consummating a union. In connection with this conference the Reverend Sennen Kishi, Chairman of the Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church, is quoted in the Christian Press (Kirisuto Tsushin) as saying: "The majority supports the proposed merger of the churches but there are a few difficult problems still to be settled. As this is a matter of considerable importance we must not act hurriedly. Tentatively it is assumed that the churches which approve will unite." A truly united Lutheran Church would constitute a very influential body in the Christian movement here.

KANTO FELLOWSHIP OF CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES

The Kanto Area Fellowship of Christian Missionaries is holding its annual conference at Tokyo Union Church, Thursday, December 27. The principal speakers for the occasion will be the Most Reverend H. W. K. Mowll, Primate of the Anglican Church in Australia, who is presently leading a party of Australian churchmen on a visit to Communist China. Archbishop Mowll was in West China from 1922 to 1933 where he served first as Assistant Bishop and later as Bishop. Following that he became Archbishop of Sidney and then in 1947 was made Primate of Australia. He has been active in the International Missionary Council and represented his church at Amsterdam and Evanston meetings of the World Council of Churches. From 1946 to 1951 he was one of the presidents of the latter organization and has served in other executive positions. Also in the party are the Archbishop of Perth, Most Reverend R. W. H. Moline and Canon Marcus Loane, a prominent author and Principal of Moore Theological College in Sidney. Archbishop Mowll and party are due to arrive at Hong Kong on December 17 and in Tokyo the following day.

RURAL EVANGELISM CONFERENCE

A conference on rural evangelism under the auspices of the National Christian Council was recently held at Hiroshima at which special attention was given to problems in Chugoku and Shikoku. Professor Seiichi Nakamura and Professor Masayoshi Tatebayashi of Hiroshima University spoke on special characteristics of rural life in that area and Professor Toshi Kimata of Tokyo Theological Seminary on social and economic aspects of rural evangelism.

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DETAILED REPORT OF BIBLE DISTRIBUTION

The Japan Bible Society reports that during the twelve months ending October 30, 1956 the total distribution was of 1,822,117 Bibles and portions. (78,980 Bibles, 395,762 New Testaments, 1,341,625 portions, 5,750 Braille). Depositories and stores sold 433,807 Bibles and portions (53,623 Bibles, 314,315 New Testaments, 65,509 portions, 360 Braille); churches sold 132,025 (16,302 Bibles, 52,361 New Testaments, 58,042 portions and 5,320 Braille); and colporteurs 1,222,039 (Bibles 9,008, New Testaments 28,819, portions 1,184,206, Braille 6). Free distribution accounted for only 34,246 (Bibles 47, New Testaments 267, portions 33,868, Braille 64). 12,457 were sent abroad to other societies (Bible 3,262, New Testaments 5,093, portions 4,100, Braille 2), making a grand total distribution of 1,834,574 (Bibles 82,242, New Testaments 400,855, portions 1,345,725, Braille 5,752). The penetration of the Christian Bible into the cultural life of the Japanese people is a constant source of amazement and thanksgiving.

A CORRECTION

Two unfortunate omissions in the item "Special Public Bath for Physically Handicapped" resulted in misstatements which the editors desire to correct. Miss Kazue Hayama is a minister and not minister of the Mitake church. Also the words "use of" were omitted between the words "lost" and "her". Miss Hayama did not lose her right arm and leg. It would have been more correct to say that their use had been impaired.

IN BRIEF

The United Church of Christ will honor Sunday School pupils who have attended all but three sessions during the past year. 6,304 boys and 10,771 girls or a total of 17,975 are eligible for the special badges which the church has prepared.

Because of ill health the Reverend Shiro Murata, Chancellor and President of Meiji Gakuin University, has been granted a leave of absence until March 1957. The Reverend Mitsuru Tomita, Chairman of the Board Directors, will become Acting-President. Selections of an Acting-Chancellor will be decided by the faculty in the near future.

Dr. Stanley Jones is scheduled to arrive in Japan February 1 for a Three months program of Ashrams and evangelistic services. He will depart for India on April 30. This will be Dr. Jones' fifth postwar visit to Japan.

The Education Association of Christian Schools is conducting a survey of selected Christian Schools in order to determine attitudes toward co-education which is still regarded as some thing of an innovation by many people in this country.

